

Remarks

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of the telephone interview granted on February 22, 2007. In the interview, the Stuard reference was discussed, as well as certain proposed claim amendments. No agreement was reached. Pursuant to the discussion, applicant submits proposed claim amendments and requests entry.

The proposed amendment to claim 1 specifies that the oil is coalesced from a first flow of air into the separator, and that the recycling valve is selectively operable in response to increases and decreases in air pressure of a control signal that is a second flow of air separate from the first flow of air.

This is structurally and functionally different from Stuard. Stuard opens and closes his drain valve 25 in response to the main flow of air coming into the separator to be filtered. There is no separate control signal or separate air flow or air line for controlling the valve 25. In applicant's device, on the other hand, a separate control signal is provided. In the illustrated embodiment, for example, which is not limiting, the recycling valve 30 (Fig. 1) is under the control of a governor 96 of the compressor 14. The governor monitors pressure downstream from the compressor. The valve 30 is actuated by a control signal over line 24 when the compressor is unloaded, or at other preselected or predetermined times. As a result, a suitable control signal (control pressure) is applied to the control port 92. This is separate from the main flow of air, to be separated, which is via line 16.

Clearly, therefore, applicant's claimed structure is different. In addition, applicant's claimed system allows for more flexibility. For example, the valve can be opened and closed when desired regardless of the state of operation of the separator itself. This is not possible with Stuard.

The proposed claim also specifies coalescing of oil in the first flow of air. In Stuard, there is no coalescing at all--rather, just filtering--as was discussed in response to the first Office Action. They are different.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1, as proposed to be amended, patentably distinguishes from the prior art.

Proposed new claim 35 is dependent from claim 1 and further specifies that the first flow of air flows through a coalescing medium in the cartridge, on which medium particles of oil collect and coalesce. In Dickson, the coalescing takes place in the air stream before even reaching the filter cartridge, as discussed in response to the second Office Action. In Stuard, there is no coalescing at all--rather, just filtering--as was discussed in response to the first Office Action with respect to another reference that filters rather than coalesces. Accordingly, it is submitted that proposed claim 35 patentably distinguishes from the prior art.

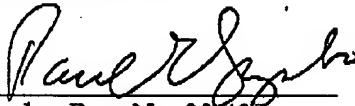
Independent claim 16 is also proposed to be amended, in a manner similar to claim 1. Thus, independent claim 16 is submitted to be allowable.

Proposed new claim 36 is dependent from claim 16 and further specifies that the step of directing a flow of compressed air of a vehicle compressed air system into a cartridge of an oil separator and through a coalescing medium in the cartridge comprises collecting and coalescing particles of oil from the flowing compressed air on the coalescing medium in the cartridge. In Dickson, the coalescing takes place in the air stream before even reaching the filter cartridge, as discussed in response to the second Office Action. In Stuard, there is no coalescing at all--rather, just filtering--as was discussed in response to the first Office Action with respect to another reference that filters rather than coalesces. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim proposed claim 36 patentably distinguishes from the prior art.

Applicant requests entry of the foregoing amendment, and allowance of the application.

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Respectfully submitted,


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